

# SCOTLAND'S STORY

42

**Highland void as  
people lose out  
against sheep**

**Six-point plan for  
more democracy**

**Live in misery  
then die at 37  
in town squalor**

**The Kirk splits  
in high drama**

**Scottish soldiers  
march proudly on  
through centuries**



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**1824**

James Hogg's 'Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner' published.



**1834**

Thomas Chalmers' Evangelicals hold a majority in the General Assembly.



**1843**

The Free Church splits from the Church of Scotland in the Disruption.



**1846**

Severe famine is followed by large scale clearances from the Highlands.



**1856**

End of immediate post-famine period of clearance in the Highlands.



**1875**

Membership of the Orange Order in Scotland increases.



**1860**

Life in the farm bothies condemned by clergy.



**1876**

Tenements crumble in Dundee as workers live in urban squalor.



**1881**

42nd Highlanders amalgamate with 73rd to form the Black Watch.

**In Part 43:  
Victorian Scotland**





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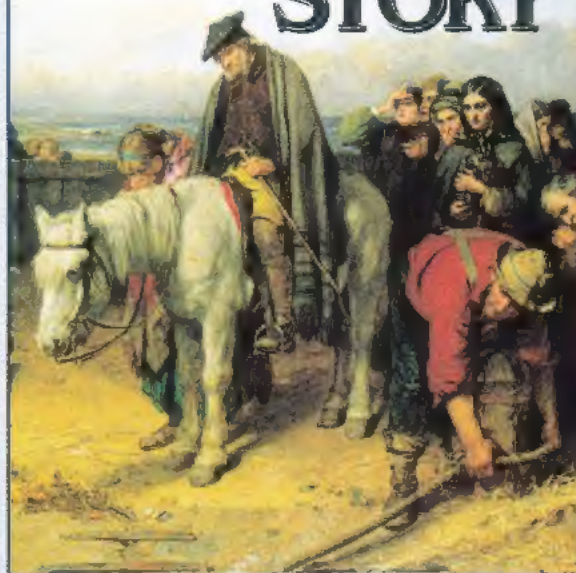
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## COMMENT

# SCOTLAND'S STORY



**COVER:**  
The Last of the Clan, painted by Thomas Faed in 1865, portrays the sense of despair and injustice associated with the Highland Clearances.

# The Highland Clearances

When a severe potato blight plunged the Highland crofting districts into crisis in 1846, several organisations grouped together in an effort to bring relief to those now threatened with starvation.

While state intervention had a part to play, the main burden of the relief effort was carried by the Edinburgh and Glasgow Relief Committees and the Free Church of Scotland.

The Free Church, bristling with zeal after its break with the Church of Scotland in the 1843 Disruption, was the only organisation in the field during the critical winter months of 1846-7.

Eager to bring aid to its loyal congregations in the north-west and the islands, the Free Church's effort was nevertheless free of any sectarian bias, and grateful thanks for supplies were received from Catholic areas.

In early 1847, a powerful influence over the relief effort emerged in the form of Sir Charles Trevelyan, the key figure in the government relief programme for the famine in Ireland. Trevelyan regarded the Irish and the Scottish Gaels as racially inferior and,

unsurprisingly, the character of the relief effort in the Highlands soon began to change.

Trevelyan introduced the hated 'destitution test' which Free Church ministers described as 'systematised starvation' and provoked widespread hostility.

Ultimately, however, the Highlands did not starve. A combination of ameliorating factors ensured that, in the end, the scale of the tragedy was of statistically small significance compared to that in Ireland, where one million people lost their lives.

The Irish experience is a reminder that events in the Highlands need to be kept in perspective.

The Highland famine was followed by a period of large-scale forced clearance of township populations in the crofting counties. Many of these were marked by severe brutality on the part of the landowners and their agents.

One of the worst examples was Colonel John Gordon of Cluny's estates on Benbecula, South Uist and Barra which saw terrible scenes of people being chased by policemen and estate 'heavies', and led to waiting ships in handcuffs.



# It was people versus

■ The Last of the Clan, Thomas Faed's graphic painting of 1865, sums up the Clearances in terms of anguish. The remains of a clan forlornly watch the departure of a steamship. Sometimes it was worse for those who were left behind.





# sheep. The sheep won



Times were changing, economic life quickening, depression played a role, but the removal of Highlanders from their homes in massive exodus was an act that remains unforgiven

**T**here are arguably few episodes in Scotland's past that provoke as much interest and debate today as the notorious 'Highland Clearances'. So what are the facts behind the infamy attributed to this dramatic period of Scottish history?

Although evictions took place in the Highlands before 1790 and continued after 1860, these years encompassed the most intense cycle of clearance. Even within this period, however, two phases can be detected.

The first, lasting until around 1815, saw the removal of population from traditional townships and their relocation to newly-created crofting communities.

The second phase, motivated by the economic collapse of these communities, saw a more comprehensive type of clearance which sought the expulsion of population.

The driving force was the quickening of commercial activities, especially after 1770. The realisation that Blackface and Cheviot sheep could be grazed profitably in upland areas presented a great opportunity to Highland landowners.

In the years from 1786 to 1788, the Glengarry estate saw the first large scale removal of people as a sheep run was created, and by 1796 there were over 60,000 sheep in the area.

The most notorious clearances of the first phase occurred in the county of Sutherland where, in the years from 1807 to 1821, nearly 10,000 people were removed from Strathnaver and other locations to make way for sheep.

It should be noted that such large-scale and meticulously-planned operations were unusual.

Many clearances were small scale and piecemeal and are difficult to locate in the historical record. The victims of eviction were often

removed to coastal sites, where their new holdings were insufficient for subsistence.

To raise money to pay their rent the tenants had to resort to industries, such as the gathering of seaweed, which was then processed for its alkali products, and returned huge profits to the landowner.

The labour requirements for such industries, alongside the profits available from sheep farming, motivated landowners to deprecate emigration. Nevertheless, from 1763 to 1815 nearly 30,000 Highlanders emigrated to North America. In 1803, after intensive lobbying by landowners, legislation was passed which increased the cost, and thereby reduced the extent, of emigration.

The growing demand for military manpower in the late 18th century also motivated the process of clearance. From 1756 to 1815 nearly 75,000 Highlanders were recruited to the British Army. Many of these men had been promised land on enlisting and, as a result, crofting communities were created.

That clearance in this first phase was concerned with relocation of people can be illustrated by the fact that the population of the Highland counties continued to increase. The population of Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland was recorded as 193,224 in 1755; in 1801 the figure was 245,000, rising to 310,000 by 1831. Even in Sutherland, where the largest-scale clearances had taken place, the population rose from 20,774 in 1755 to 25,518 in 1831.

The end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 was a turning point in the history of the Highland Clearances. The industries which landowners had relied on for profits and for the retention of population went into decline.

Military service was affected as the army demobilised: the kelp ►



Money spoke. Out went the traditional land-owning families, and in came the fabulously rich

► industry, no longer sheltered from European competition by wartime embargoes, suffered severe reversals. In 1810 kelp was selling for £10 per ton; by 1828 this had fallen to £3 13s.

So the crofting communities which had been created by the first phase of clearance were no longer viable. Small tenants were thrown back onto the inadequate resources of their holdings. The impossibility of subsistence induced many to move temporarily to the industrial economy of the lowlands in search of employment.

A further sustaining factor was the new dependence on the potato. This crop was not only reliable, returned a high yield from a small acreage and could be cultivated on poor ground but, in combination with milk and fish, provided a balanced diet.

An important change in Highland life after 1815 was the fact that many rich men from outside the region took advantage of the relatively-cheap land to purchase large northern estates.

Many traditional landowning families were swept away in this process. In Lewis, the Mackenzies of Seaforth were replaced by the fabulously-wealthy merchant Sir James Matheson in 1844. Matheson had made his fortune as a partner in Jardine, Matheson and Company, a business venture that traded in opium in far-flung colonial quarters in India and Hong Kong.

Two years earlier, the richest commoner in Scotland, Colonel John Gordon of Cluny, casually purchased the island of Barra in an Inverness coffee house. Although the externally-generated wealth of such men meant that the economics of their Highland estates was not crucial to their finances, they conducted swingeing clearances in the 1840s.

Gordon's shameful conduct in his proprietorship of Barra was punctuated by some of the worst excesses of the clearances.

With the partial failure of the potato crop in 1836 and its total failure a decade later, the process of clearance was taken to new levels.



■ Crofting maiden: but this romanticised painting by Thomas Faed ignores the toil and misery.

With the simultaneous collapse of the lowland industrial economy and cattle prices, the Highland population, especially in the former kelping areas, experienced a famine.

With the reform of the poor-laws in 1845, and fears that the able-bodied poor could be awarded relief by a system which was largely funded by landlords, there was an obvious imperative to clear crofting communities of surplus population.

A recent survey has uncovered 23 major clearances in the 10-year period from 1846 to 1856. Several notorious clearances occurred in these years. In 1849, 21 families were cleared from Strathconan in Ross-shire; in 1850, 132 families

were removed from Barra; at Borreraig and Suisnish in Skye over the period from 1852 to 1854 over 100 people were evicted; over the same period in the neighbouring island of Raasay around 500 people were cleared.

The potato blight which precipitated this disaster struck many areas of northern Europe in the mid-1840s. Ireland suffered the worst results with over one million deaths and a similar number of emigrants.

As a consequence of the localised nature of the crisis in the Highlands, the proximity of the wealthy Lowland economy and a well-funded relief effort, conditions in the

Highlands – although very bad – did not reach such tragic levels.

Clearances also took place at Knoydart on the west coast of Inverness-shire, on the Gordon estate in South Uist, Benbecula and Barra, and on Lewis. On Tiree the Duke of Argyll deliberately targeted the landless population, and those with very small holdings, for clearance and emigration.

Although it is difficult to estimate the numbers of people subjected to clearance in these years it is possible to estimate the numbers who emigrated from the Highlands in the 1840s and 1850s.

Whereas landlords had





■ The new residents: a flock of Blackface sheep in a Highland glen was a better business proposition than 'surplus' Highlanders.

discouraged emigration during the first phase of clearance, they positively encouraged it in the second phase.

Australia emerged as an important destination for Highland emigrants, numbering around 5,000, assisted in their voyage by the Highlands and Islands Emigration Society.

Nevertheless, around 10,000 people were assisted by landowners in emigration to British North America in the decade from 1846 to 1856. These figures do not include those who left on their own account, nor do they include those who went to the United States of America.

Although resistance to clearance had taken place during the first phase, most notably in a concerted attempt to drive sheep from Ross-shire and eastern Sutherland in 1792, protest occurred more frequently and with greater intensity during the second phase of clearance.

Events such as the riots which ensued at Greenyards in Easter Ross, when the landlord attempted to evict 22 families, the attempt by over 600 people at Sollas in North Uist to resist a policy of clearance and emigration in 1849 or the forcements of Sheriff's Officers at Coigach in Wester Ross in 1852-3,

gained great publicity in the press.

Another level of protest came in the rhetorical form of Gaelic poetry. Although anti-clearance poems are not common, some can be identified: two such are Allan Macdougall's 'Oran do na Ciobairibh' (Song to the Lowland Shepherds) from around 1800, or the anonymous 'Gur Olc an Duine Malcolm' (Malcolm is a wicked man), which excoriates Malcolm of Poltalloch for the evictions he carried out at Arichonan in Argyll.

Although evictions continued to occur, the scale and intensity of the process was much reduced after the mid-1850s.

These changes took place throughout Europe, but the Highland Clearances are notable for their concentration in a very short period and the fact that they were conducted in an entirely unregulated way by private landowners operating within a legal code which gave them awesome power.

Although the decades after the famine have been seen as more prosperous, Highland communities remained vulnerable to the whim of landowners. On many estates, factors and their employers were vigilant in the prohibition of the subdivision of holdings and used the



■ The empty Highlands: pretty crofts at Durness but piles of stones and ancient dykes indicate that here was once a thriving community.

threat of eviction as a device to exact the payment of rent.

Security of tenure, which afforded protection against such coercion, was not acquired until 1886 and even then, only after unprecedented protest, the investigation of a Royal Commission and the adaptation of Irish legislation to suit Highland conditions.

The Clearances remain one of the most potent themes in modern Scottish culture. Several novels, most notably 'Butcher's Broom' (1934) by Neil M Gunn and

'Consider the Lilies' (1968) by Iain Chrichton Smith, explore the topic. The stage play 'The Cheviot, The Stag and the Black, Black Oil' which dealt, in part, with the Clearances played to packed village halls across the Highlands in the mid-1970s.

The Highland Clearances have left a deep scar on the Scottish psyche. They have formed an important theme in Scottish culture and contributed to the importance of the land question and anti-landlordism in Scottish politics. ■



# Workers chart the

'War to the knife' was a threat, but somehow the popular drive for greater democracy just fizzled out

**T**he popular struggle for democracy in Scotland and the rest of Britain can be traced back to the 1790s, but it had to wait until 1832 before any measure of success was achieved. In that year, the First Reform Act was passed by parliament and its passing enfranchised the middle classes. The triumph of the middle classes, however, was, at the same time, a blow to the political aspirations of the working classes.

Although active in these popular struggles since the 1790s, workers remained outside the pale of the constitution. Not surprisingly, they felt cheated by their middle-class allies and especially the Radical MPs to whom they had given so much support.

A campaign for reform of the factory laws attracted little enthusiasm from the Glasgow MPs, despite the existence of a large number of cotton mills in the city.

Relations deteriorated even further with the onset of economic depression and mass unemployment in 1837. The deterrent old poor law prevented authorities from providing relief to the able-bodied.

Popular discontent over deteriorating economic and social conditions provided the context for renewed political activity. The call was answered when, in 1838, the London Working Men's Association (LWMA) drew up a charter for political reform that involved wholesale reform of the British state and the incorporation of the working class into the Constitution. It became popularly known as the Six Points:

- Universal Manhood Suffrage
- Annual Parliaments
- Vote by Ballot
- Equal Electoral Districts
- No Property Qualifications for MPs
- Payment of MPs

The demands were hardly new. At least five of the six points figured in a reform statement of 1780, but what was novel was that support for the Charter was almost exclusively

working class in character.

In spite of the fact that the Chartist movement had some middle-class leaders in Scotland, such as Glasgow shopkeepers James Moir and George Ross, bedrock support came from handloom weavers and skilled artisans. But in times of economic hardship coal miners and factory workers would swell the ranks of the movement.

Although the appeal of Chartism was primarily political, it was argued that only through constitutional change would social and economic grievances be addressed.

A national petition was drawn up in favour of the six points by the Birmingham Political Union (BPU), and speakers were sent out to other areas of Britain to stir up support. Indeed, Scotland's political reawakening was largely the responsibility of the BPU's political missionaries.


However, from the outset, deep-seated tactical divisions existed over how best to pursue the demand for the Charter. At the national level, one school of thought, which included the LWMA and the BPU, favoured 'moral force', that is, petitions, demonstrations and other peaceful methods of agitation.

The other, led by the fiery Irishman, Fergus O'Connor, preferred 'physical force', including, if necessary, armed insurrection.

O'Connor declared he was in favour of a peaceful solution, but he added: "If peace giveth not law, I am for war to the knife".

Although the extreme physical force position won favour in places such as Forfar, Renfrew, Elderslie and the Vale of Leven, it was the 'moral force' argument that won the support of most Scottish Chartists. This was largely due to the existence of a radical tradition that was heavily influenced by Enlightenment values and subscribed to by skilled workers in Scotland.

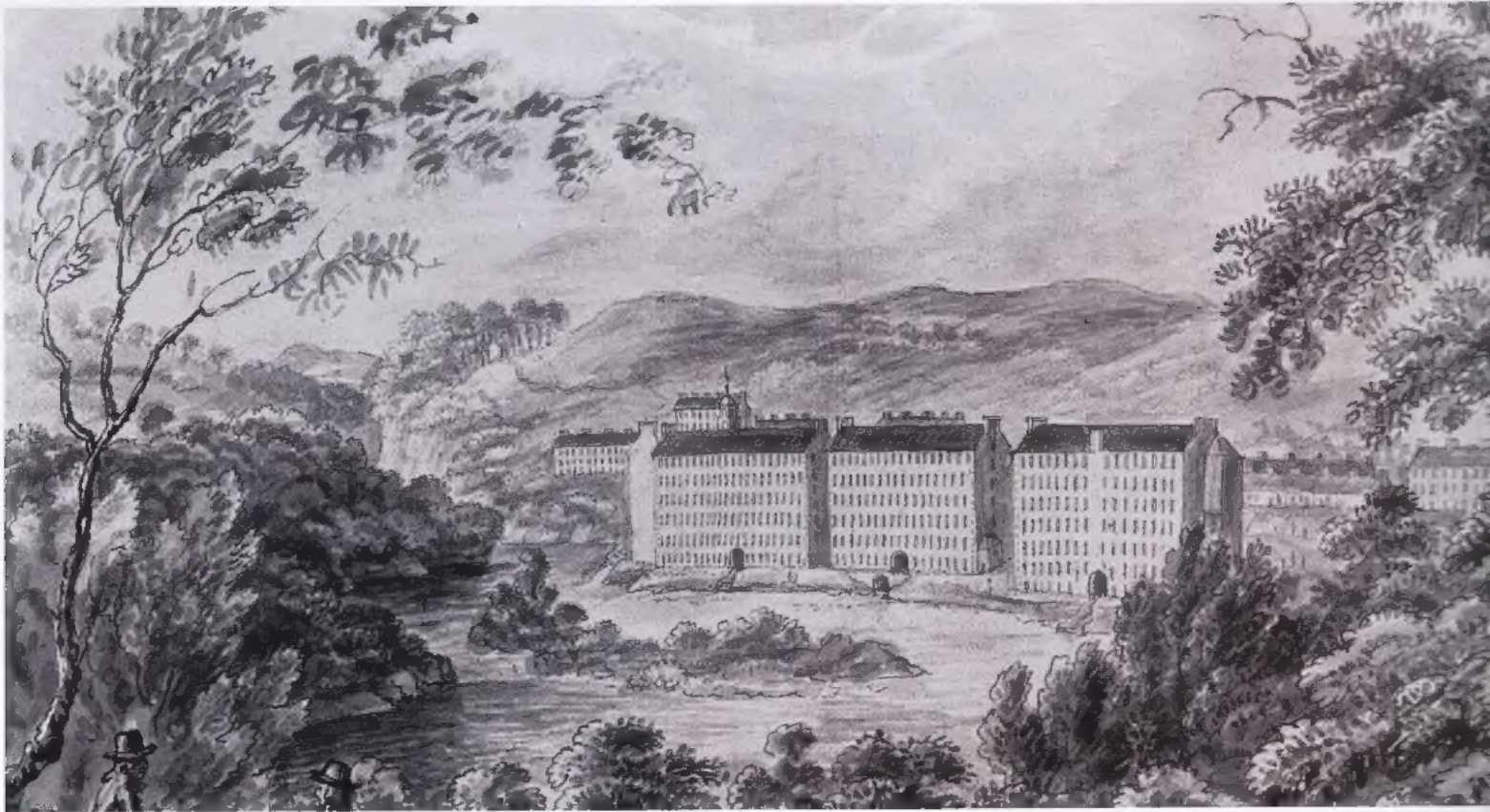
They stressed the power of argument and persuasion over violence and gave the movement in



Lord Cockburn was an architect of the 1832 Reform Act, which acted as a spur to the Chartists.



# way to a better deal



■ Countryside cotton mills at Lanark: the Chartists received much of their support from workforces in these industrial establishments.

Scotland a moralistic character, reflected in the growth of Chartist churches, temperance societies and co-operative stores.

Although generally peaceful, strong support for a more robust stance in support of the Charter was evident during periods of political tension. When the first Chartist petition to parliament was rejected in 1839, in spite of 1,280,000 signatures, proposals for an armed insurrection were drawn up.

Similarly, in the wake of parliament's rejection of the second Chartist petition in 1842, a nationwide general strike was called for – the so-called 'sacred month'.

Although this call was answered enthusiastically by workers in the North of England, Scotland remained calm. The rejection by parliament of the last national petition in 1848 led to 'Bread or Revolution' riots in Scottish cities. But these protests were generally short-lived and drew support from a relatively small section of the working classes.

The failure of physical force made

the idea of an alliance with sympathetic members of the middle classes attractive to some Chartists. Around 1839, the middle classes began to petition parliament in the name of free trade to repeal the Corn Laws – legislation designed to protect the economic interests of landowners.

An organisation – the Anti-Corn Law League – was established to pressurise the government into abolishing the Corn Laws. Feelers were put out to the Chartists to mount a joint campaign.

The Chartist leaders in England rejected the League's proposal as they felt that it was immoral to ally themselves with factory owners whose pursuit of profit made the lives of textile workers intolerable.

There was also a concern that repeal would lead to lower bread prices, thus inviting employers to reduce wages.

In contrast, Scottish Chartists readily embraced the League's demand for repeal of the Corn Laws. Anti-landlord feeling was particularly acute in Scotland,

especially among displaced Highlanders, Catholic Irish and the radical middle and working classes. John Mitchell, an Aberdeen Chartist, said that the sum of his political activities was to 'unmask the titled locust band'.

But there were also strong economic incentives for Scottish workers to support the League. The export orientation of the economy favoured the widest freeing of trade. This would lead to an expansion of the market and create more opportunities for employment.

Thus a shared commitment of opposition to the landed interest and support for free trade drew Scottish Chartists towards a closer alliance with the middle classes north of the Border, while in England relations between the two bodies remained bitter and tense through the period of Chartist agitation.

That does not mean tensions did not exist between Chartists and the League in Scotland. Frequent clashes arose over the question of priority.

What Chartists complained of was not the necessity of repealing the

Corn Laws, that was taken for granted, but that repeal should be given priority over the Six Points.

Relations between the Glasgow Chartists and the League were acrimonious in the period 1839 to 1842, but the severe depression of that year led to closer links being established.

In Aberdeen, Chartists called on repeal of the Corn Laws to be part of the programme to repeal 'class' legislation. However, while the League was successful in 1846 in achieving free trade, the workers remained without the vote.

Chartism was in the doldrums for the five years after 1842, but another severe economic depression in 1847 kick-started the movement into life.

International events also played a part. In France, a revolution unseated the French king, Louis Philippe, and proclaimed a republic. This sparked a series of revolutionary uprisings throughout Europe.

Taking heart, the Chartists called another convention in the spring of 1848. It was decided by the meeting ►





■ Masons at work on the detail of Scott Monument in Edinburgh. It was craftsmen like these who also gave their support to Chartism.

► that if the petition were to be rejected a third time then a National Assembly would be formed with O'Connor as president.

It was a clear challenge to the Constitution. The Duke of Wellington, with the support of 150,000 special constables, 8,000 soldiers and 1,200 Chelsea pensioners, checked a march to present the third petition to the House of Commons on April 10.

In the face of such overwhelming odds, O'Connor advised his supporters against marching on parliament and they adjourned to Kennington Common. The petition was delivered by cab and was once more summarily rejected by MPs.

After 1848, the Chartist movement faded into history. In examining the question of failure we cannot overlook the fact that the state had a monopoly over the means of coercion to maintain the political status quo. This fact was made apparent to the Chartists in 1848. Revolution was unlikely to succeed in such circumstances.

But history shows us that coercion by itself cannot maintain a regime in power in perpetuity when the majority of its citizens are alienated from it. A state needs to acquire a form of legitimacy over those it rules. In Scotland, as well as Britain

as a whole, the middle classes had emerged in 1832 with a share of political power and this was consolidated in 1846 with repeal of the Corn Laws.

Although relations between the radical middle classes and the working classes were not as strained in Scotland as they were in England, talk of 'physical force' frightened the former into the arms of the reactionary landed classes. Thus the Chartists were denied the help of influential sections of society, whose support was necessary in promoting the property-less and powerless towards full citizenship.

However, it was not simply the opposition of property that led to political failure, there were also structural and economic divisions within the working classes which had to be taken into account.

Chartism was an umbrella that covered a host of different interests, each with their own vision of the kind of society they wanted. Some, like handloom weavers and artisans, looked to return to a pre-industrial age, while others, such as cotton spinners, were dependent on the new industrial society for their living.

Then there were differences of ethnicity and gender. Political reform was to enfranchise all males

over the age of 21. The exclusion of women was taken for granted.

Similarly, problems with geography and language ensured little headway was made in the Highlands. Irish Catholics in Scotland, until O'Connell's death, were also outside the Chartist movement.

While we cannot underplay the importance of these structural factors in explaining Chartist failure, perhaps of more importance are issues connected with the movement itself. Not only did the Chartists fail to resolve the question of moral versus physical force, but also the discourses used in the political struggle were contradictory.

They argued that the hardship and oppression faced by workers resulted from their exclusion from the political system.

However, once the state began to engage seriously with the question of social reform, as it did in the 1840s with the introduction of legislation limiting the hours of work of women and children, and the economy began to improve, it was difficult for Chartists to convince workers that their grievances stemmed from a corrupt political system.

Thus there was no strong basis for antagonism towards the middle

classes, since the root of working-class misery was not economic exploitation but political exclusion.

The failure to develop a class analysis of the whole capitalist system, which could be used to unite both pre-industrial workers with factory operatives, led to mobilisation round the shibboleths of middle class radicalism of 'the people', rather than the working class. The defeat of the Chartist movement was in the end partly a failure of language.

Although Chartism ultimately failed to transform the political system, it did have an important impact on the development of politics in Scotland after 1850.

In the long run, it must be remembered that five of the Six Points have been incorporated into the British political system, the only exception being annual parliaments.

In the short run, it gave workers experience in the running of political campaigns and did much to heighten class awareness.

This had important consequences for the development of trade unionism: the revival of the demand for electoral reform in the 1860s.

After renewed political campaigning by many battle-hardened old Chartists, the vote was given to urban male householders in 1868.



# LIVE IN MISERY THEN DIE AT 37



■ The healthy life in the wide-open spaces of Buccleuch Place, Burntisland, Fife, around 1890. It was in stark contrast to the over-crowded towns.

**As people flocked to towns living conditions were soon nightmarish. Sardine housing, sanitation a joke, epidemics of TB and cholera, mortality rates horrendous - and the dram shops were everywhere.**

One of the distinguishing features of 19th-century Scotland was the unprecedented rate of urban expansion. In 1801 some 21 per cent of Scots lived in communities with 5,000 inhabitants or more; by 1901 the figure had risen to almost 58 per cent. Glasgow, by the later date, accounted for a substantial 17 per cent of the national population.

As the number of town and city dwellers grew, so the territorial profile of communities altered. The rapid transformation of the urban landscape led, inevitably, to the intensification of problems relating to overcrowding, deteriorating health standards and the provision of adequate housing.

Of course, there were enormous variations in urban living standards. Residential building on the outer limits of established communities added a qualitatively new dimension to the urban aesthetic, as was illustrated by prestigious Victorian

developments like Edinburgh's Morningside

Yet suburbanisation also represented the flight of wealthier inhabitants to more salubrious districts to escape from the noisy, smoky and congested heartland.

'Breathing space' came to be a prized commodity as the century progressed, because many of the traditional urban centres had become overwhelmed by the sheer weight of numbers. As one local doctor commented about 1840s Greenock, "Towards the east or old part of the town, the amount of population crowded into a small space can hardly be credited"

For some contemporaries, direct comparisons were made between overcrowding and high death rates.

Jelinger Symons was a Government Commissioner investigating urban living conditions during the 1830s, notably Glasgow's notoriously-congested warren of 'wynds and closes', clustered around the High

Street. He described it bluntly as a community built upon 'plunder and prostitution', with scant opportunities for inhabitants to breathe wholesome air

Declining life expectancy revealed the extent to which the population was suffering. During the 1820s, the average life span in Glasgow was 42 years for men and 45 for women; by 1841 the figures had dropped five years to 37 and 40. It was not until the 1880s that the earlier figures were restored

Improvements in public health were largely responsible for this turnaround, although child mortality remained one of the most entrenched problems of Victorian Scotland. Social reformers were especially concerned by the blighting effects of city life upon the young.

The statistics were certainly disturbing. In 1861, 54 per cent of all deaths in Glasgow were of children aged under 10 years, who succumbed to ailments such as ►



## URBAN SQUALOR

■ This 19th-century postcard from Glasgow shows a High Street vennel in all its 'glory'.

► measles, whooping cough, scarlet fever and diphtheria.

Dundee, however, could claim the highest infant mortality rate in Scotland by the 1900s. A predominantly textile town, with an unusually high percentage of working women, the toll on child life had been encouraged by a lethal combination of low wages and bad housing conditions.

There were also recurring epidemics which profoundly undermined the quality of urban life. Typhus fever first made an impact between 1817 and 1819, at a period of acute economic depression in Scotland. It returned at similar times of social strain during the 1830s and 1840s, affecting smaller towns like Dumfries as well as the larger cities.

Typhus was indelibly associated with poverty, dirt and overcrowding, although the precise cause of the disease (the body louse) was not identified until the 1900s. There was consequently much speculation as to why it remained such an intractable problem throughout the 19th century.

One Dumfries doctor, reflecting popular unease about the mysterious nature of typhus, described it evocatively in 1840 as "a common and constant foe, lurking, sometimes hid, yet ever ready to be roused into action."

Cholera aroused even more disturbing images. A swift-acting, water-borne disease, there were major epidemics in 1831-32, 1848-49 and 1853-54. The first outbreak killed 10,650 Scots, while some 6,000 deaths resulted from the third outbreak.

In 1854 almost two-thirds of the Scottish fatalities were in Glasgow, where the Rev Dr Robert Buchanan, a prominent Free Church minister, declared cholera to be God's warning against middle-class complacency over the conditions of the poor.

The decision to construct the city's celebrated municipal water works at Loch Katrine was taken amidst the threat of the epidemic, with Parliamentary approval granted in 1855. As a result of this new boon to the well-being of the city, the impact of the 1866 epidemic was far less serious, with only 68 deaths.

During the 1860s and 1870s, Scotland's other main cities inaugurated or expanded their own

public water supplies, demonstrating that the crisis over public health was legitimising direct interventionism to improve the urban environment.

If tainted water was regarded with anxiety so, too, was polluted air. With forests of factory and foundry chimneys, there was a perennial pall of smoke over Glasgow.

New communities that had emerged to serve the needs of heavy industry were similarly engulfed. 'Fire, smoke and soot, with the roar and rattle of machinery' were described as the main characteristics of Coatbridge, a coal and iron town which grew from 741 inhabitants in 1831 to nearly 16,000 by 1871.

The pollution problem was

tentatively tackled from the end of the century, when organisations like the Smoke Abatement Association began to point out the assorted health hazards. Tuberculosis of the lung, the dreaded TB, was by this time a major killer, associated with the smoke-laden atmosphere of towns and cities, but also directly attributable to the effects of overcrowding.

However, disease and ill-health could also be subtly corrosive, debilitating far more of the population than were killed outright. Dr James B. Russell, Glasgow's formidable Medical Officer of Health between 1872 and 1898, constantly spoke out against

the conditions that fostered what he saw as a downward spiral of physical deterioration.

While the slum child may grow into adulthood, he argued, "it cannot get rid of rickety bones, or impaired organs, or a tainted constitution."

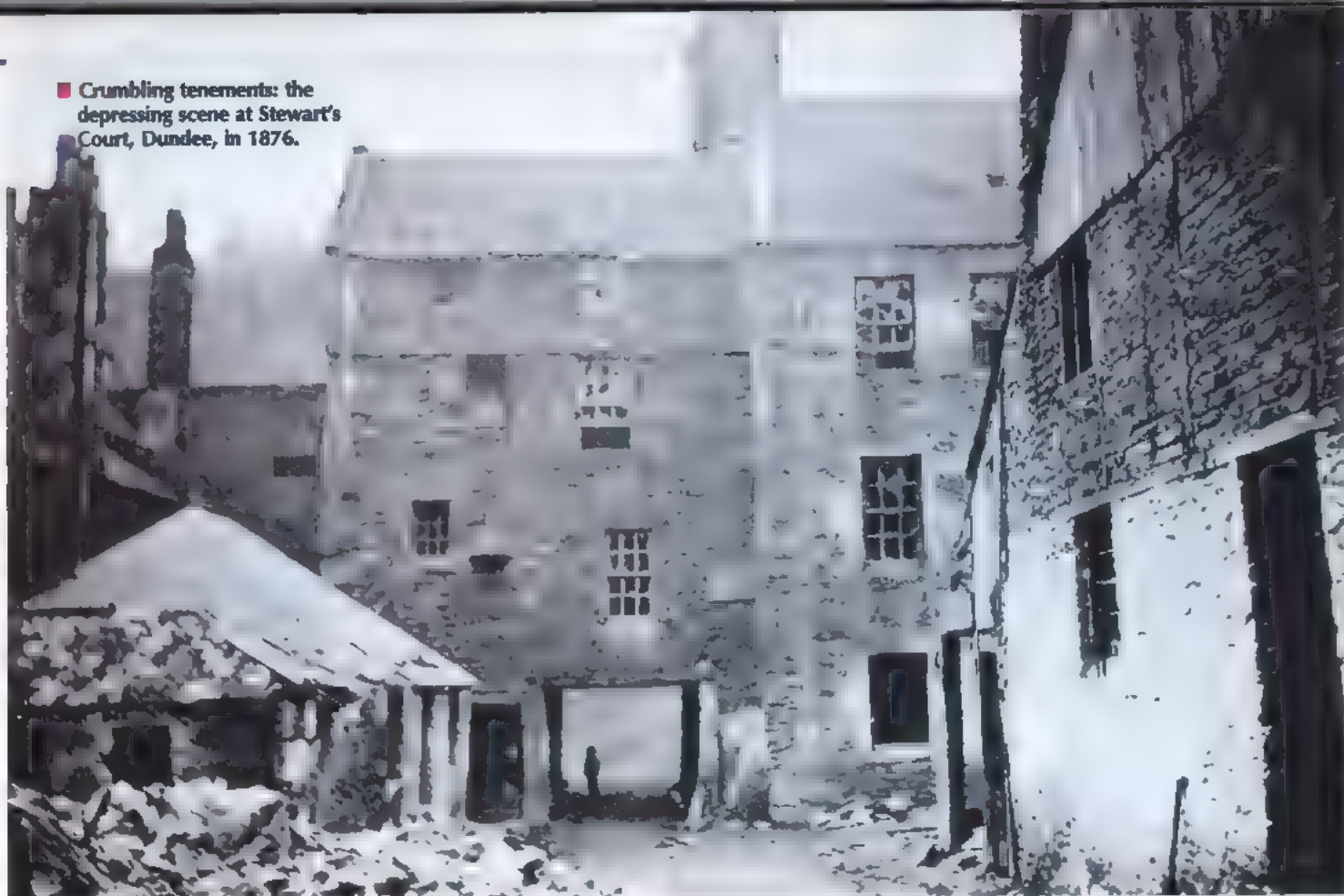
In keeping with the temperance climate of the times, Russell was scathing about the proliferation of dram-shops and public houses, which made such a damaging contribution to urban life-styles.

His great personal crusade was against overcrowding, especially the tendency of urban Scots to occupy one or two room dwellings. During the mid 19th century, over 70 per cent of Scottish families were





■ Crumbling tenements: the depressing scene at Stewart's Court, Dundee, in 1876.



reckoned to live in such conditions, with the figures for Paisley and Dundee approaching 80 per cent.

Not surprisingly, housing came to be Scotland's thorniest problem as far as the quality of urban life was concerned.

As early as 1818, one Glasgow medical expert had vocally expressed concern about the dearth of habitable housing in the city, urging the construction of dwellings specifically for the poor. The growing slum problem was much analysed and written about, both in Parliamentary and local investigations.

Perhaps most famous were Edwin Chadwick's Sanitary Reports of 1842, which exposed the squalid conditions that existed in towns and cities throughout Scotland, including northern communities like Tain and Inverness. The close connection between poor health and bad housing was stressed repeatedly and, ironically, the problem was no less pressing 60 years later. By the 1900s housing had become a potent political issue, and much to the forefront of working class concerns via the fledgling Labour Party.

The severity of Scotland's housing problem was directly related to the traditional tenement style of building, which had long been a striking feature of the urban landscape. These high rise dwellings varied in size, and some could be commodious.

However, at the opposite end of

the scale was the single-end, where only one room prevailed and where sanitary facilities were usually non-existent.

In the 19th century, tenements tended to be the property of a single owner, who rented out the individual apartments. It thus maximised profits if units were smaller, which increased congestion.

The worst period was before the 1860s, when there was virtually no official control over overcrowding.

Families plus lodgers were often

were reluctant to disturb the private property market. However, the social climate in the wake of the cholera epidemics became more favourable to interventionism. Public health legislation was enacted for the whole of Scotland during the 1860s, and more rigorous action was taken against sanitary infringements.

In Glasgow it was made legal to 'ticket' houses deemed susceptible to overcrowding. They were literally labelled with a brass plaque to indicate maximum capacity. Any

by a devastating report on the sanitary condition of the city by the Medical Officer of Health, Dr Henry Littlejohn. Dundee's Improvement Act was passed in 1871, with similar intentions to demolish decrepit slum housing. Yet although they were highly effective for opening out the claustrophobic core of cities, rehousing was emphatically not a priority of these early projects.

It was only when the private property market ground to a halt in the late 1870s that municipal housing began to be considered as a practical option. Undoubtedly, there were contradictions in Scotland's urban achievement by the onset of the 20th century. The slums had not disappeared and the health of communities still gave serious cause for concern.

For all the technological advances of the much-vaunted 'Second City of Empire', Glasgow experienced an outbreak of bubonic plague in 1900, when 16 people died. It had come as a 'rude awakening'. The authorities associated it more with the Middle Ages than modernity.

Yet for all the setbacks, the urban environment was much more controlled than even 50 years previously, and there was far greater concern about the planning of towns and cities, to meaningfully integrate the infrastructure. Hard experience was teaching significant lessons for the future. ●

## A forests of factory chimneys gave Glasgow a permanent pall of smoke

crammed into accommodation never intended for multiple occupancy, including older tenements and the sub-divided town houses of the departed middle classes.

By the mid-19th century, the incidence of gross overcrowding made it all too apparent that there was a housing crisis. The example of Glasgow revealed that even though the housing stock had increased by 38 per cent during the 1850s and 1860s, this did not keep pace with demographic developments, as the city's population had grown by 42 per cent.

Yet solutions had to be tackled with care. Civic leaders were initially at a loss what to do, as they

surplus population was speedily hustled out by the 'sanitary police', although it merely intensified the problem elsewhere.

Slum clearance projects were also an increasingly favoured device by civic authorities in their mission to enhance the quality of urban life.

Glasgow led the way in 1866 when, after years of heated debate and discussion, the Town Council secured its ambitious City Improvement Act. Some 30,000 slum dwellers were eventually displaced as a result of the clearance strategy, and the city centre was transformed architecturally.

Edinburgh initiated a scheme one year after Glasgow, prompted partly



# Horse whisperers



Melody makers: an anonymous 19th-century bothy band with a full range of instruments and moustaches.

**Life in the bothy was rough, earthy, godless and immoral, it was said. But the young, mobile farm workers made the best of it – and their bothy ballads give a rich flavour of their existence yoked to the ‘ferm touns’**

**I**n the eyes of the clergy they were hopeless dens of vice and immorality. To the lairds and farmers of the Lowlands they provided a cheap way of housing their workforce. To many thousands of young male farm servants from the beginning of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th, they were quite simply ‘home’.

Physically spartan they may have been, but farm bothies nurtured one of the most dynamic and expressive folk cultures of recent times.

The very existence of the bothy system was itself indicative of the growing social gulf which was emerging between farmer and servant in the early 19th century.

Many workers who had previously bedded down in the farm kitchen, taking their meals with their boss and his family, were moved across the yard into outhouses just through the wall from the cattle and horses.

Here up to six men occupied one

single room where they cooked, ate, slept and passed away their evenings out of sight of the watchful gaze of their employers.

Their possessions were kept to a minimum, for most were very mobile, moving on every six months in search of higher wages and better working conditions.

The food the men prepared for themselves was of the simplest kind, comprising oatmeal, milk, potatoes and very little else. In 1863, a local doctor in Errol, near Dundee, was pleading with the bothy lads to improve their diet: “Am I to be told that in a bothy with five or six stout, active and sensible young men not one could be got to cook a plain, simple meal?”

His protestations were in vain, however, for porridge, brose and milk remained the standard bothy fare throughout the entire period of their existence. The making of brose was almost a ritual – the bowl was

held in the palm of the hand, into which went a fistful of ground oatmeal with some salt, pepper and a bit of butter or margarine.

Boiling water was poured on top, and it was stirred with the handle of the spoon. Strict table etiquette was not confined to the houses of the well to do, for in the bothies it was considered bad manners to place the thumb over the rim of the bowl, an act punishable with a sharp rap on the knuckles from someone else’s spoon!

Such details of daily living are poetically captured in the folksong tradition which emerged from the ranks of the Lowland farm servants in the 19th century.

The bothy ballads, composed in an earthy Scots vernacular, deal with the issues which were of most interest to those whose world was the ferm town.

Love and sex are themes which lie at the heart of many of them, some



# with songs to sing

■ Home sweet home: the bothy at Drybrun, Glen Ogilvie, on the Strathmore Estate, where the workers lived.



leaving little to the imagination, while others take the form of good humoured but heartfelt protest songs which highlight dissatisfaction with working conditions or tyrannical employers

At the 'fein fairs' the gatherings held twice a year in May and November at which the recruiting of workers took place – farmers would entice the most experienced servants with exaggerated reports of the living and working conditions they were offering.

Great importance was placed on the quality of the horses to be provided as these were the most important tools of the trade, but on arrival at the farm, servants were often disappointed:

*He promised me the ae best pair,  
That e'er I set my een upon  
But when I got tae the Barnyards,  
There was naethin there but skin and  
the bone*

For that particular narrator,

though, work took second place to his social life which was neatly summed up in a single verse:

*I can drink and no be drunk,  
I can fight and no be slain,  
I can court anither's lass  
And aye be welcome tae my ain!*

Given the anti establishment rhetoric and parody of these songs, it is not surprising those in local positions of authority, particularly the kirk ministers, saw the bothy system as a threat to both social and moral order

Their calls for the banning of bothies were incessant throughout the 19th century.

In a letter to his local newspaper in 1860, one Perthshire minister who had visited some bothies was horrified, concluding that the inhabitants knew no religious teachers and had no family guidance and, as a consequence, sought 'impure and immoral pleasures'

wherever they could find them.

While the system was allowed to continue, the future was bleak, he suggested, for 'these outcast men, after having spent their early youth in such immoral and godless practices, at length marry and bring up a race of children after their own kind'

While certainly worried about the perceived link between the existence of bothies and increasing illegitimacy rates (for which there is actually little evidence) what probably concerned the clergy most of all was the nature of the rites and practices associated with the secret society of horsemen, or 'the Horseman's Word'

This was a cross between an early trade union and a form of farm servant freemasonry, which was used to teach young lads the tricks of horse control.

As the ministers were no doubt

aware, there was a strong diabolic flavour to the initiation rituals which involved shaking hands with the ultimate horseman, the Devil, symbolically represented by the hool of a calf or goat

Their meetings took place at night in a barn or byre, after the lights of the farm house were out, and were presided over by a senior horseman, cheekily titled the 'minister'.

Once initiated, the young lads were accepted into the adult world of the ploughmen, the self proclaimed kings among labourers

Many of those who took part in these ceremonies dismissed them in later life as little more than a bit of fun, but there are many horsemen still alive today who remain rigidly faithful to their oaths of secrecy and refuse to divulge even the smallest detail of their experiences

These men are the real horse whisperers ●



# Schism that shook

**It began with arguments over who had the right to choose a parish minister. It ended with the Church of Scotland split and the creation of the new Free Church**

**I**n a secular age it is difficult to appreciate the depth of feeling surrounding religion in the 19th century. Nevertheless, a clash between Church and State over the issues of Spiritual Independence and Patronage resulted in the sundering of the Church of Scotland, and the creation of the Free Church of Scotland, in May, 1843.

The disputes leading up to this event extend back to the re-establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland in 1689 and to the reintroduction of Patronage in 1712. Patronage involved the right of landowners – private individuals,

Town Councils, or the Crown – to present ministers to congregations, this could take place without reference to the wishes of the congregation and the system was a Kirk grievance from 1712 until its abolition in 1874.

A deeper problem was the relationship between Church and State: the combination of these questions in the 1830s was especially divisive.

The period since the end of the Napoleonic Wars had seen an Evangelical revival in the Church of Scotland and the growth of a group of younger ministers who not only

opposed the theology and pastoral indolence, as they saw it, of the dominant Moderate party in the Church, but also sought to restore the leadership of the Church in its relationship with the State.

They did not advocate the separation of Church and State, but argued that the relationship should be predicated on the 'Spiritual Independence' of the Church in matters of religion.

This would become the leading issue in the 'Ten Years' Conflict' prior to the Disruption, as the Civil Courts sought to impose judgements relating to disputes over the question

The first General Assembly of the Free Church shows the signing of the document that separated them from the Church of Scotland





# the Kirk to its core

of Patronage onto the Church

Evangelicals, and later the Free Church, argued that they supported the principle of an Established Church, but wished it to play a leading, rather than a subordinate, role in relation to the State

There were Presbyterians outside the Church of Scotland who resented the support given to the Established Church from general or local taxation. These 'Voluntaries' argued that Church and State should be entirely separate and denominations should be funded from the contributions of members. Thus the status quo in the Church of

Scotland was under attack from two directions

By 1834 the Evangelicals, led by Thomas Chalmers, held a majority in the General Assembly, the highest of the courts which governed Church affairs. This led to the passage of two pieces of legislation in the Assembly of 1834: the Chapels Act and the Veto Act.

The former gave representation in Church Courts to the new Churches or Chapels – which had been established, often in urban areas with rapidly growing populations, but which did not have the status of a full parish Church. This affected the

political situation in the Church Courts as most Chapel ministers tended to be younger evangelicals.

The Veto Act gave congregations the right to reject a patron's nominee. To opponents of patronage, who advocated its abolition, this did not go far enough. To those who defended patronage it was a dangerous concession to democracy.

These Acts precipitated conflict over Spiritual Independence as they became subjects of litigation in the Scottish Civil courts.

Important legal disputes arose from disputed presentations at Auchterarder in Perthshire and at

Strathbogie in Aberdeenshire.

The Auchterarder case ended up in the House of Lords and resulted in the declaration of the Veto Act as illegal. To the Evangelicals this was unwarranted interference by the Civil Courts in a purely religious matter, and constituted a violation of Spiritual Independence.

The Strathbogie cases were highly complex, so much so that they were depicted in a caricature entitled 'The Reel of Bogle: A Clerical Dance'.

To Evangelicals, the results of legal action in this case seemed an even more grievous violation of the principle of Spiritual Independence. ▶







■ Thomas Chalmers (left) held a critical position of leadership and authority in the new breakaway Free Church as its first moderator.

Disruption, a prospect which the Evangelicals affected to deprecate, seemed unlikely.

The General Assembly of 1842 adopted a document entitled the 'Claim of Right' – a deliberate evocation of the Presbyterian heritage of 1689 – which advocated the 'Spiritual Independence of the Church'. In November, 1842, Evangelical Ministers met in Edinburgh and began to prepare for a breach in the Established Church.

In January, 1843, the government rejected the Claim of Right as 'unreasonable', and the following month the Court of Session, in the *Stewarton* case, declared the Chapel Act to be illegal, with the result that Chapel Ministers could no longer sit in Church courts.

This was seen as a violation of Spiritual Independence, a threat to the dominance of the Church by Evangelicals, and was the final straw which made a Disruption inevitable.

In May, 1843, a large number of evangelical ministers walked out of the General Assembly and constituted themselves as the Free Church of Scotland.

Ultimately, some 474 (40 per cent) of the 1,195 ministers of the Church of Scotland joined the Free Church. Mostly these were younger

► – the Court of Session effectively claimed competence in the constitution of Church Courts.

These localised disputes were exacerbated by a debate over the place of the Church in society and its relationship with the state. The Church of Scotland had responsibilities over areas of social administration, most notably education and poor relief.

Evangelicals, such as Thomas Chalmers, argued that the Church was capable of dealing with the problem of poor relief without the interference of the state. Despite social experiments by Chalmers in the east end of Glasgow, it seemed to many – especially the Edinburgh surgeon and social reformer William Pulteney Alison – that the fearful squalor engendered by an industrial society merited state intervention.

Moral supervision of society by the Church, developed in rural Scotland, did not translate to the cities. Chalmers feared the separation of Church and State and

## With solemn dignity 474 ministers walked out of the General Assembly to devastate the Established Church

the growth of a secular social administration.

In the 1830s, he sought the support of the Whig government for a campaign of Church extension which would allow the Establishment to reach out to the unchurched and (in the eyes of Chalmers, who was a Tory in politics) dangerous masses.

The Whig government, relying on the votes of dissenters who resented government support of Established churches, was not willing to fund such a campaign and the distance between Church and state grew.

The Commission on Religious Instruction in the mid 1830s suggested that the Church of Scotland was much weaker than was widely assumed in terms of the number of Churchgoers it attracted. Large scale political movements,

not least Catholic emancipation, seemed to threaten the position of the Established Churches in both England and Scotland. So the dispute in the Church of Scotland contributed to a feeling of vulnerability among Established Churchmen in the United Kingdom.

A series of events in the early 1840s brought matters to a head. A Tory government, under the Premiership of Robert Peel, was elected in 1841. This administration, however, was no more helpful, nor comprehending, in matters of Scottish ecclesiastical politics than its Whig predecessor.

Attempts, by Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Argyll, to find a legislative solution to the problems facing the Church of Scotland came to nothing, and by 1842 a





■ Remote areas could be a Free Church problem, but sometimes a boat could make a useful pulpit.



■ The Disruption affected every church in Scotland, but as the split was at its height Glasgow Cathedral was undergoing a major restoration.

ministers who had been ordained during the Evangelical revival.

Estimates vary of the extent of the membership of the Church which departed, but it would seem safe to assume that around half did so.

The Free Church was strong in parts of the Highlands and amongst the up and coming middle classes of urban Scotland.

Its most remarkable achievement was to fund the construction of Churches, manse and schools, find the resources to pay the stipends of

its clergy, and play a leading role in relieving the famine which struck the Highlands in 1846.

These operations were paid for entirely from the deep pockets of Free Kirkers.

However, as initial enthusiasm waned, and the Church came to rely ever more on the contributions of its members, wealth became a virtue and an almost necessary qualification for the eldership in the Free Church.

In its early years, the Free Church sought to make controversy from

the refusal of certain landowners such as the Dukes of Argyll and Buccleuch to grant sites for Church buildings. The Free Church developed an efficient propaganda machine, not least in the columns of the vituperative Edinburgh newspaper *The Witness*.

Ironically, given the protestations of support for the principle of establishment by the Evangelicals, the effect of the Disruption was to greatly weaken the position of the Church of Scotland.

This was revealed by the Religious Census in 1851, and gave ammunition to those who argued for a separation between Church and State.

It became difficult for the Church to argue it was the National Church and, although there is not a direct causal relationship, the stewardship of poor relief was transferred to the state in 1845 and state control of education followed in 1872.

The Free Church, in the Lowlands at least, steadily watered down its commitment to the principle of Establishment and joined with the Voluntaries in 1900, creating the United Free Church. A few Highland congregations, arguing fealty to the ideals of 1843, declined to join the new Church.

In 1929, after constitutional negotiations, the United Free Church and the Church of Scotland were reunited. ●

## TIMELINE

**1832**

Whig government introduces Reform Act, extending the Scottish electorate to 65,000.

**1836**

Partial failure of the Highland potato crop is an omen of worse to come.

**1839**

Scottish Chartists embrace demands for repeal of the Corn Laws.

**1842**

General Assembly issues 'Claim of Right' asserting the spiritual independence of the Church.

**1843**

Evangelical ministers walk-out from General Assembly to form the Free Church of Scotland.

**1845**

Stewardship of poor relief transferred from Church to state.

**1846**

Free Church plays leading role in relieving potato famine that strikes the Highlands.

**1847**

Chartist movement kick-started again by economic depression and French republicanism.

**1848**

Chartism fades, largely because of its failure to mobilise working class consciousness.

**1849**

Attempts by tenants to resist forced clearance gain great publicity in the press.

**1850**

132 families removed from Barra alone, during major phase of Highland Clearances.

**1872**

Role of Church in national affairs declines further, as state takes control of education.



# FAMILIAR TUNE FROM KING BILLY'S ZEALOTS

**Roll the drums, sound the flutes, the Orange Order continues on the march begun more than 200 years ago in declaration of ancient enmities**

**T**he Orange Order crept unobtrusively into Scotland at the close of the 19th century – it was perhaps the last time that Scottish Orangemen did anything quietly. Although the fortunes of their movement waxed and waned over the next century, this bastion of pugnacious Protestantism never lost its capacity to perplex and repel generations of commentators in its land of adoption.

The border counties of Ulster formed the real cradle of Orangeism. Here, land hunger had sharpened conflict between Protestant and Catholic peasants during the 1790s. After a typical

faction fight at The Diamond, Armagh in September, 1795, the Order emerged as a defensive oath-bound association, borrowing loosely from Freemasonry.

As emigration was a central fact of Ulster life, the movement quickly spread. Close at hand, with well-established cultural and economic links, it was hardly surprising that Scotland became one of the first Orange outposts.

The original lodges were established by regiments returning from service in the United Irishmen's rebellion of 1798, but also soon provided a rallying point for Ulster weavers and craftsmen who were seeking a new life in the villages of Ayrshire and

the South West. Over the next two decades, the Order spread northwards in step with the expansion of industry and emigration.

There remained a strong input from Ulstermen, as the movement struggled to anchor itself in the native 'No Popery' tradition.

The early lodges seemed to have functioned as benefit societies and drinking clubs and it took until 1821 before the Orangemen in Glasgow felt confident enough to hold their first 'Twelfth of July' public parade.

The experiment was not a success and the processionists were taken into protective custody. Yet parading was the lifeblood of the Order.

In marching, the Orangemen not



■ The west of Scotland has long been an Orange Lodge stronghold and this was the scene during the 1998 Orange Walk in Glasgow.





■ 'King Billy' himself: William III and II became a symbol figure.

only celebrated their solidarity and shared traditions, but also attempted to impose a sense of order on their new surroundings. The 'walk' became a symbolic instrument for asserting Protestant power, with a display of regalia, cockades, sashes and scarves.

The route of march itself expressed the Orangemen's determination to resist Catholic 'encroachment'. Music also played an important role. The most popular and provocative party tunes were *Boyne Water* and *Croppies Lie Down*, the strains of which were the catalyst for many a fracas in the West of Scotland, especially when played near Catholic chapels.

Marches were indeed a barometer of the Order's fortunes. The parades of the first half of the century were sporadic and small-scale and often accompanied by violent party disturbances. Orangemen in

Scotland had to learn that they were only one part of a large-scale population movement from Ireland, outnumbered by as many as three or four to one by their Catholic countrymen.

The new urban centres where the Irish had settled resembled frontier towns. In areas like Coatbridge and Airdrie, residential segregation was well underway from the 1820s, but the physical boundaries of the opposing communities were still fluid and contested.

Cashes were inevitable. As the Irish became further absorbed into the mining labour force, by the 1840s and 50s Lanarkshire was to acquire a formidable reputation for Orange and Green conflicts.

On July 12, 1857, for example, 300 Coatbridge Orangemen were attacked and routed. As a result, Orange parades were banned in the county for 10 years, with Ayr and

Renfrew rapidly following suit.

Checked by the zeal of local magistrates and lambasted by the Scottish press for importing 'party quarrels', this resolutely working class movement was thrown back on its own resources.

The 1860s was a decade of mixed fortunes. Orange ranks swelled noticeably. Grand Master George McLeod's boastful estimate in 1875 that he stood at the head of 90,000 members, probably overstated the case. But there was little doubt of an impressive advance over the total membership of 660 listed for the year 1848.

The Order recognised that this development reflected accelerating

with a display of order and 'respectability' – an ethos with a powerful Scottish resonance.

This reinvented parading tradition required some logistical skill. 'Twelfth' attendances from the 1870s fluctuated at around 12,000-15,000 susceptible to economic downturn and the ravages of a Scottish July.

In periods of political tension, such as the successive Home Rule crises, the 'right to march' regained its symbolic power. As the third Home Rule Bill threatened in 1912, a record 40,000 gathered in Coatbridge, with 74 bands – the various lodges taking two-and-a-half hours to pass a given point.

The Order was also rewarded by a

## At times of tension the 'right to march' carries symbolic power

labour migration from Ulster rather than the 'conversion' Scottish Protestants.

The West of Scotland remained its geographical stronghold. Here its members were often semi or unskilled workers struggling to maximise their position in tough industrial labour markets and anxious to use local systems of influence, such as lodge membership. This strategy was liable to trap Ulster Protestants into a pattern of enclave employment and social exclusion, not dissimilar from Catholic experience.

It was not only their members who risked marginalisation. The Order itself, in the later 19th century, still suffered persistent official and popular disapproval. The recurrent banning orders on parades placed the Orange leadership in a difficult dilemma.

On the one hand, rank and file members craved 'Pure Protestantism in action.' Yet to encourage public processions contrary to the law, endangered the Grand Lodge's new vision of the place of Orangeism in Scottish society.

The Order, they hoped, would act as an agent of moral improvement and Protestant evangelism, while claiming the social and political clout which they felt its numerical strength and loyalist credentials entitled it.

One response was to formalise and marshal closely the grand public demonstrations of the Orange calendar. Claiming public thoroughfares, these shows were now designed to impress old enemies and potential allies alike.

modest, but growing sprinkling of clerical figures and Conservative luminaries on their platforms. Even now, these carefully staged public rituals did not carry Orangeism into the Scottish mainstream. In the first place, Orangeism was primarily an Irish movement in terms of origins, membership and political preoccupation.

Relationships remained tense with the Scottish press who were quick to condemn the Order's alien quality. Clerical enthusiasts also remained a rather eccentric minority – indeed the lodges often functioned as alternatives to the established denominations.

The rapprochement with the Conservatism seemed a more promising prospect, particularly from the 1890s when a new generation of politicians came to identify with the Order's anti-Home Rule stance and its ability to turn out the working-class vote in key constituencies. But the Orangemen were only one of a series of interest groups amid the party's general advance in the West of Scotland.

For all the strident notes of the marching season, the ideological power of Orangeism was arguably never fully mobilised in Scotland.

Yet the Orangemen refused to accept the marginal status thrust upon them by Scottish society.

They believed that their credentials as loyal Protestant citizens fully entitled them to become 'a power in the land'.

The potent blend of suspicion and triumphalism would carry the Order into its next century. ●



# SHEPHERD WITH

He emerged from Ettrick with words on his mind, but it is only now James Hogg's worth is fully appreciated

**T**he work for which James Hogg is now most famous, 'The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner', was published in 1824, but was almost immediately forgotten.

It was not so much the complex narrative structure of the novel – in which the story is told twice, once by a contemporary Editor of the memoirs and once in the memoirs supposedly written at the beginning of the 18th century – that proved unpalatable to contemporary readers, but the gothic tale of an extreme Calvinist tempted to destruction by the devil.

Fanatical Calvinism, supernatural intervention, and the issues of the right of the elect to commit evil without divine retribution were to be too distant from the realities of a Scotland beginning to participate in the benefits of imperial expansion.

And yet 'The Confessions' is now regarded as one of the most outstanding works of the 19th-century novel. It was 'rediscovered' in the 1930s and has become one of the major influences on modern Scottish writing, its multiple modes of narration and its concern with self-justifying evil having been imitated by writers as diverse as Muriel Spark, Robin Jenkins, Emma Tennant and Alasdair Gray.

Robert Wringhim, the central character of 'The Confessions', comes to believe that someone else, looking identical to himself, is committing the crimes of which he is accused, or else that he is inhabited by two or three different personalities who sometimes take over his identity.

In many ways the situation is a dramatisation of Hogg's own experience in the literary Edinburgh of the 1820s, when he was an influential member of, but also a target of the satire of, the group who ran 'Blackwood's Magazine'. Hogg,



Hogg the farmer: but Hogg the novelist, poet, song writer and publisher remain essential parts of his life. Perhaps it was 'Hogg the character and dreamer' that was most remembered immediately after his death.

who published his own magazine, 'The Spy', in 1810, was brought in, shortly after its foundation, to help Blackwood's establish itself as a Tory challenger to the Whig 'Edinburgh Review'.

Under the editorship of John Wilson and J G Lockhart, and with the assistance of Hogg, it achieved early success and notoriety by publishing scurrilous attacks on its political enemies in what it described as 'The Chaldee Manuscript', written in the language of the Old Testament.

This initiated a style in which Blackwood's would specialise until the 1830s, involving extravagant attacks on its perceived political enemies conducted anonymously or

under fictional identities.

The literary world of Scotland in the 1810s and 20s was obsessed with concealed and doubled identities. It was ruled over by Walter Scott, who did not reveal himself as the author of 'The Waverley Novels' until 1826, and who sometimes used the anonymity of the magazines to review his own novels.

Hogg was to be both the hero and victim of one of the most famous examples of this literary fashion as a result of his presentation in John Wilson's 'Noctes Ambrosianae', which ran as a regular feature in Blackwood's from 1822 to 1835.

The 'Noctes' claimed to be accounts of nights spent in

Ambrose's Tavern by Wilson himself, in the disguise of 'Christopher North', with Hogg as 'The Ettrick Shepherd', a wild, semi-literate claimant to the mantle of Burns. The portrait of Hogg in the 'Noctes' was to haunt Hogg as an alternative version of himself, more powerful than his real identity and more successful than his own works.

Hogg the aspiring author, was presented as the uncultivated shepherd while Hogg, the real shepherd, struggled to establish for himself a literary identity moving from folk poet to journalist to novelist as the taste of the times changed.

Hogg had entered the Edinburgh



# A PEN TO WIELD

literary world in part through his relationship with Scott, whom he had known since Scott visited Hogg's mother's house to collect ballads for his *Border Minstrelsy*.

The ballads and folk poetry, which Scott had sought from his mother, were also Hogg's inspiration and, having taught himself to write, he had his first poem published in 1794 when he was 24 years old.

Among his most successful early works was 'Donald MacDonald', a song which he regularly encountered being sung in his company by people who did not know he was the author.

Hogg's folk collecting activities, and particularly his 'Jacobite Relics of Scotland' (1819-21), were to be significant contributions to the preservation of traditional Scottish materials. Like Burns, however, Hogg was trapped between the uncertainties of literary life and the unprofitability of farming. The failure of his farming ventures drove Hogg to try to make a living as an author, and the failure of authorship to provide him with a living that drove him back to farming.

In 1830, at the age of 60, Hogg was bankrupted and the parallels with Sir Walter Scott were not lost on him when he came to publish in 1834 his account of the 'Domestic Matters and Private Life of Sir Walter Scott' (1834).

Hogg's fame as a character was greater than his fame as a writer. However much he might have resented the 'Ettrick Shepherd' identity, his own account of his life, both as an author and a farmer, presents his continual struggle against financial collapse as balanced by an indomitable spirit of gleeful enjoyment of all that life might offer and a stoical acceptance that his methods of working – he claimed to be unable to plan or revise any of his writings – would produce works which would not find acceptance with an educated public.

Hogg's own account of his literary life swerves between presenting himself as a commercial author, struggling to make a living from whatever he might turn his hand to, and presenting himself as a natural genius, who simply trusts to whatever his imagination tells him he has to write.

Until recently, Hogg was best

known for his folk poems and tales, but as modern editions of his works have appeared he has come to be recognised as a major innovator in the forms of the novel, an innovator whose work points forward to some of the key concerns of the modern Scottish novel.

Hogg's novels combine the styles of oral folk narrative with the requirements of a written work of art, and set the different modes of constructing narrative – and the different ways of perceiving the world – that derive from them, in conflict with each other. Thus 'The Brownie of Bodsbeck' (1817) approaches the same historical period as Scott's 'Old Mortality' but with a much more sympathetic presentation of the Covenanters and their world view.

Hogg, like Burns, admired the independent mind which could recognise its commonality with the rest of humanity. The opposite of this he saw in Claverhouse, whom Scott had sought to portray in a more sympathetic light. 'He seemed to regard all the commonality in the south and west of Scotland as things to be mocked and insulted at pleasure, as being created only for the sport of him and his soldiers, while their mental and bodily agonies were his delight'.

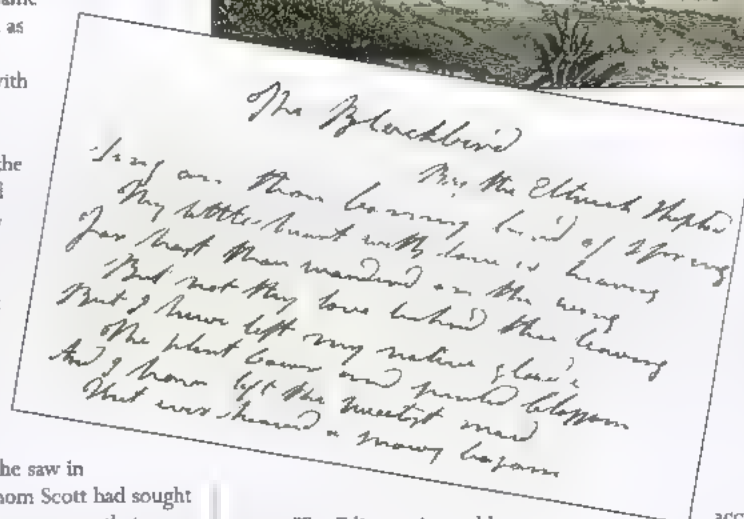
The 'Brownie' juxtaposes the folk belief in superstition with the rationalism of modern history's understanding of the past.

It was a theme which Hogg was to exploit in his two most ambitious narratives, 'The Three perils of Man' (1822) and 'The Three Perils of Woman' (1823), which combine folktale, fantasy and historical narrative in an amalgam that undermines all the certainties on which the Enlightenment's understanding of the past was based.

It is thus that Hogg was to make central to 'The Confessions of a Justified Sinner', for the 19th century editor in that novel retells a story in which he cannot believe and which cannot, for him, make any historical



■ Above: an engraving of Hogg's Ettrick birthplace.



Left: The handwritten original of his poem 'The Blackbird'.

sense. The Editor is incapable of understanding the mentality of a 17th century Calvinist for whom both good and evil are ultimate realities of life rather than merely relative terms within a particular social ethos.

The 'Confessions' reveals the extent to which the past is understood only through the values of the present and only through the assumptions of a social class which seeks to control those forces which might threaten. 'History' is based on presuppositions, embodied in Hogg's Editor, that prevent it engaging with the real experiences of human beings with entirely different understandings of life.

It was this which was to make 'The Confessions' so relevant to readers in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Robert Wringham's fanatical belief in his inability to do anything but good because of his status as one of the elect reflected only too

accurately a world in which fascists and communists believed that the future justified all of their actions.

The Editor's inability to understand the very text which he is presenting to the public matched the failure of liberal democratic politics to be able to understand the forces ranged against it.

Robert's discovery of his horrific crimes committed in a state of mind which he can no longer recall was all too accurate to a generation which discovered too late the crimes that had been committed in its name by its political leaders.

Over a hundred years after it was written, 'The Confessions' posed profoundly the issue of the reality of evil for a century which had come to believe that evil was no more than a matter of unimproved social conditions, and gave a contemporary significance to the Calvinism in which most Scots had ceased to believe. ●



# Marching through

Off to India: the image of the Scottish soldier serving in the far-flung corners of the world is atmospherically caught here by painter Sam Bough as the 2nd Battalion the Gordon Highlanders, the 93rd of Foot, head down Edinburgh's High Street from the Castle to entrain at Waverley Station. The picture was exhibited in the Royal Scottish Academy in 1836 and is held in the Bank of Scotland a few yards from where the scene is set.



**F**ield-Marshal Montgomery, desert victor at El Alamein, once controversially referred to Scottish regiments as 'tribal'. What Montgomery was trying to convey was that of all the British troops under his command, it was the Scots who held the most deep-rooted sense of local ties, be it clan, family, region or country.

When the going became tough, these tribal, family instincts gave the Scottish soldier an inner strength. In essence, when things were at their worst, the Scottish soldier was likely to be at his best.

The Scots have always been warlike. It is a condition decreed when survival – kill or be killed, bow the knee in homage or fight for freedom – is at stake. As a small country with a bigger southern neighbour, nurturing expansionist ambitions, survival and freedom will inevitably become issues.

In the case of Scotland it meant from earliest times every able-bodied

## Scottish soldiers excel at the close quarter, eyeball-to-eyeball combat

man was a potential soldier. Those early peoples who inhabited what is now Scotland fought, of course, simply to exist. They fought each other, neighbouring tribes, and the motivation was self-preservation, land and power. As larger groupings developed, invading Romans and Vikings discovered that these stubborn peoples did not give up their freedoms lightly. Both the great walls of Hadrian and Antonine on Rome's north-west 'Scottish' frontier were built to defend the Roman soldiers.

The story of the Scottish professional regimental soldier in the British army does not formally begin until the 17th century. Until then, again for survival reasons, tenants expected to be plucked from their fields to do battle for their overlord at

times of crisis. When the Norman nobility became part of the Scottish hierarchy, they formed their own fighting forces, complete with body armour of metal helmets and the long, mail vest or hauberk.

The invention of gunpowder changed the tactical face of Medieval warfare, but the skills of slash, thrust, swing, skewer, lance, grunt and scream remained the infantry soldier's stock in trade. The Scots were never known as renowned gunners, never capable of mounting a large body of cavalry, but at cold-metal, close-quarter, eyeball-to-eyeball combat they are among the best.

Their reputation as fighting men was well known on the Continent and many Scots became mercenaries for those who could pay the price. It is

said Gustavus Adolphus, leader of the European Protestant cause, had 20,000 Scots in his ranks during the Thirty Years' War. His opponents, the French, who had an elite Scottish royal bodyguard from 1445, were able to deploy around 10,000 Scots.

One of Adolphus's most able Scots commanders was the Catholic John Hepburn. When his military loyalties were questioned, he took himself and his Scottish troops over to the French side. Later Hepburn was given authority by Charles I to raise 1,200 recruits from the Lothians, and that is how the first regiment in the British army was born – the Royal Scots, the First of Foot. It was 1633.

The Royal Scots are a typical example of the tradition of Scottish soldiering. Their memorial in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh, below the Castle, is simple, moving, atmospheric and crystallises the story of the Scottish soldier at a glance. Across the monument's seven plinths are those



# centuries



solemn but stirring war is from the Declaration of Arbroath. Not for glory or riches, neither is it for honours that we fight, but it is for the sake of liberty alone which no true man loseth but at the cost of his life.

There follows the list of Royal Scots campaigns and battle honours: Tangier 1680, Namur, Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde, Malplaquet, Louisburg, Havannah, Egmont, St Lucia, Corunna, Bassecourt, Salamanca, Vittoria, San Sebastian, Nive, Nagasaki, Waterloo, Nagpore, Mahadipur, Ava, Aima, Inkerman, Sevastopol, Taku Forts, Pekin, Lo Catieu, Marne, Ypres, Loos, Somme, Arras, Ys, Struma, Galipoli, Palestine, defence of Escot, Odon, Aart, Plushung. Then all the battlefronts in which they were involved throughout World War Two, ending in Kohima in Burma. In more recent times, the Royal Scots served at Suez in 1956, the Gulf in 1991 and in Northern Ireland many times.

This list should never be interpreted

as boastful or a flourish of triumphalism. It is simply a statement of fact, the service record of a Scottish regiment.

Neither is it merely a collection of place names and dates. Essentially it is a record of soldiering. Comrades, Actions fought, Friends lost, Moments of glory, fear, courage, horror. All the Scottish regiments have similar records.

Perhaps only those who have served in a Scottish regiment shared the comradeship, the laughs and nightmares and, through their regimental histories and the centuries long tradition that is literally drummed into the Scottish soldier, are able to understand the link with those ancient tribes and spearmen referred to by Field-Marshal Montgomery.

It is not even necessary to be a Scot in a Scottish regiment to appreciate these things.

"An Englishman and a Scotsman may preserve their national characteristics to the grave", wrote Captain Stair Gillon, of the King's

Own Scottish Borderers, in World War One. "But put them together in the KOSB and the best of their fighting and enduring qualities are brought out".

The Royal Scots Fusiliers were the 21st regiment of Foot, raised by the Earl of Mar and known as his 'Greybreeks' after their uniforms of 'hadden grey'. For centuries they recruited Lowland descendants of the Covenanters, yet the RSF was first raised to curb the Covenanters.

And over 300 years later, in World War Two, it was 'the magnificent courage' of a 19-year-old Royal Scots Fusilier, Dennis Donnini, that won the Victoria Cross in 1945. He died in the process.

Fusilier Donnini's father came from Italy and his mother from County Durham. In Scottish regiments, it is the tradition, the belief – and the past that makes the soldier.

It was in the 18th century, after the 45, that the kilted Highland regiments were brought into the British army. Tartan had been proscribed and was symbolic of the old patriotic Scotland and the Jacobite cause. At first the plaid, another symbol of Jacobite loyalty, was banned outwith the British Army. But such was the impact of the tartans, the pipes and drums, the warrior traditions, that Lowland regiments also adopted tartan in the following century.

The distinctive dress, the ancient beginnings, colourful histories and the pageantry of the Scottish soldiers, caught imaginations across the world.

Over the years hundreds of regiments have had far distant Scottish echoes, from the 79th Cameron Highlanders of New York, on the Union side in the American Civil War to the Calcutta Scottish of 1914, from the South African Witwatersrand Rifles in their Douglas tartan trews to the London Scottish and the Liverpool Scottish, famous English Scottish regiments.

But where there were once many, now there are only nine, as army reforms and cutbacks succeed in killing off whole regiments where past foes failed. Those that are left, for the record, are, The Scots Guards, The Royal Highland Fusiliers, the Black Watch, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, The Gordon Highlanders, the Queen's Own Highlanders, the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, the Royal Scots and the King's Own Scottish Borderers.

Their records speak for every one of them – and the stone memorials in every village and town in Scotland tell their own story of the cost paid.

Scottish soldiers do not claim to be special. There are no myths, indeed, all soldiers believe their own regiment is the cream. In the case of the Scots they are convinced of it. And that, in the end, is what inspires, wins battles, wars – and freedoms. ●

## Porcupine of pikes devastated the English

Over the centuries two military tactics have become associated with Scots' encounters with the English. The first was the schiltrom, that terrible porcupine of pikes that created havoc among Edward I's heavy cavalry at Falkirk and Edward II's at Bannockburn.

These long, steel-headed weapons, three or four times the height of a man, were carried upright in close formation, and lowered only for contact with the enemy. From a distance they looked like moving clumps of wheat.

In the face of a cavalry charge, the pikes became a bristling forest of steel. The front rank soldiers knelt or even sat, the pike butt firmly embedded in the ground to absorb shock; the second rank stooped with the butt placed firmly against the right foot for support, and the rear ranks levelled their pikes over the shoulders of those in front.

Centuries later the same tactic was used throughout the Empire to form the 'British square'. The order would ring out, calmly, to fix bayonets, then: "Front rank kneeling, rear rank standing, five rounds, load!" The drill instantly formed a daunting all-round defensive steel-edged block with venomous firepower – a distant cousin of the schiltrom.

The Highland Charge was another fearsome infantry tactic with psychological overtones. Its success relied on speed, noise, ferocity, determination and courage.

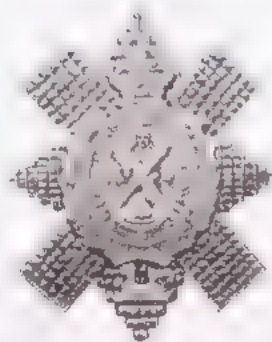
Today the tactic is still used in the infantry's final assault with accompanying din, to overwhelm an enemy position.

When the long-bayonet was in vogue, it was the Scots who had the reputation as the finest close-quarter bayonet fighters in the world. The Germans referred to Highland regiments as the 'ladies from hell'.



# Emblem of honour - from a red vulture

■ How they've changed: the walking out dress of a Black Watch sergeant and piper dating from around 1970.



The Black Watch, oldest of the surviving Highland regiments, earned their name for heroism even before they were officially formed

The famous 'Red Hackle' that soldiers of the Black Watch wear on their Tam o' Shanter bonnets is the distinguishing mark of this, the oldest surviving of Highland regiments. Yet the red vulture feather, which was awarded for an exploit of supreme courage, goes back to a time earlier than the formation of the regiment itself.

It was in 1881 that the present day Black Watch was formed by the amalgamation of two regiments, the 42nd and the 73rd Highlanders. In the previous century, the 42nd had been involved in wars against the French and spent Hogmanay of 1794 in a forced march, arriving at their destination at 4 am on New Year's Day.

Some hours later, the French were in retreat but later managed to capture two British field guns which they were dragging away until the 42nd Highlanders charged to recapture these valuable artillery pieces. Five months later, as the regiment paraded in Cambridgeshire, a box was brought out to the field and each soldier, to his surprise, was handed a red plume in recognition of that act of bravery.

So the Red Hackle was inherited by the Black Watch. But their roots go back to a time between the two Jacobite risings of 1715 and 1745, when local companies were formed to prevent smuggling and other crime in the Highlands. Local knowledge was their strong point in these policing activities, but in 1739 those groups were brought together





■ The way they fought: the date is around 1856 and a soldier of the old 42nd Highlanders is dressed ready for battlefield action.

to form what was at first called the 43rd with a Lowlander, the Earl of Crawford, appointed commander to sidestep clan rivalries.

The independent companies had worn various local tartans, but a standardised Government tartan also known as the Black Watch sett (Am Fricceadan Dubh in Gaelic) was then introduced.

There was an early hiccup in the regiment's distinguished history. Ordered in 1743 to march to London, some soldiers who had never left the Highlands before were very suspicious of the move and deserted at Finchley. About 100 of them were recaptured by cavalry as they headed homewards, and the three ringleaders were later shot in the Tower of London.

Then the Black Watch began to earn its long record of fighting prowess in wars abroad. This began at the Battle of Fontenoy in the War of Austrian Succession and continued in North America when the regiment, now renumbered the 42nd of Foot and given the title the Royal Highland Regiment, fought several actions against French and native American forces to protect the British colonies.

In one attack, pressed forward against withering musket fire, they

lost more than half of their 1,100 men. Increased to two battalions in 1758, the regiment went further north to lay siege to French occupied Montreal, after which all of Canada became a British colony.

Since then, the Black Watch has operated in many theatres of war, from the 18th century American War of Independence and the 19th century Battle of Waterloo to both of the 20th century World Wars.

Their long roll of battle honours is outstanding, and the regiment was awarded 14 Victoria Crosses for individual acts of bravery in India, Africa, France, Mesopotamia and Belgium.

One bleak event was the 1st Battalion's capture at St Valery in 1940, after fighting a tough rearguard action which enabled the bulk of the British force to be evacuated from Dunkirk.

Like many Scottish regiments, the Black Watch has traditionally recruited from one locality, in this case Perthshire, Fife and Angus.

Thus sons tended to follow fathers into the regiment and, in small Perthshire towns like Blairgowrie you will still find a thriving Black Watch Social Club where, in peacetime, people celebrate their links to a proud, warlike tradition. ●

## Enter the Royal Scots, fighting first in the field

**T**heir nickname is 'Pommes Pilate', 'Bodyguard', and indeed the origins of the Royal Scots are in the distant past. It is Britain's oldest surviving regiment.

Sir John Hepburn, a Scots-born Marshal in the French army, began recruiting for a new regiment in 1633 to serve the French crown as mercenaries.

Many among the 2,000 men joined the colours in Scotland, but others were absorbed from Continental Scottish units, so the force's lineage is complex.

Brought home in 1678, the force went through several changes of name, from the Earl of Dumbarton's Regiment to the 1st Royal Regiment of Foot, until it was given the name of the Royal Scots in 1812.

By that time it had already distinguished itself in war, and at the Battle of Sedgemoor in 1685 it fought in the honoured position at the right of the line.

Political and religious intricacies emerged when James VII sat on the British throne.

The Royal Scots, still led by the Catholic Earl of Dumbarton, remained loyal to the Stewarts, but were shortly confronted by a Protestant sovereign, William of Orange.

Only after Dumbarton gave up the command, and many officers and men were purged from the regiment, did it give its allegiance to the new royal

house. Perhaps it was a major irony that the Royal Scots were to spend much of the 18th and 19th centuries in wars against the French in whose service they had first been raised.

Almost wherever there has been a trouble spot the Royal Scots have seen service there.

Since 1855, seven VCs have been awarded to the regiment and in the Gulf War of 1991, the commander of A Company, was awarded the Military Cross and one of his soldiers gained the Military Medal.

Although this is a Lowland regiment, recruiting mainly in Edinburgh and the Lothians, it has an outstanding reputation for pipe music. A painting by the Dutch artist Stuyck is entitled *The Destruction of the Mole at Tanger 1685*, the first painting known to show military pipers – and the Royal Scots was the only Scottish regiment involved in the action.

Being Lowlanders, the soldiers wear trews in Hunting Stewart tartan rather than the kilt, although at their tercentenary in 1933 the pipers were given the privilege by King George V of wearing kilts – 'my personal tartan', the Royal Stewart.

A link with the distant past of Scotland's Stewart dynasty is that the regimental march in quick time is to a tune called *Dumbarton's Drums*.





# Fit a stramash ower a wee coo fae Turra



■ The heroine hersel – the famous white Turra Coo with owner Robert Paterson.

The National Insurance Act of 1913 triggered a good-natured farming protest. It grew in scale and farce, but against the resilient North-East farmers there could only be one winner...

*Div ye mm' oan thet  
fite coo o' Turra?*

The above question may be translated from the Buchan dialect of Scots into English as: "Do you remember that white cow of Turrit?" For those not in the know, the next logical question would be "What's so memorable about some white cow?" The answer lies within

the social fabric of the farming community in North East Scotland

The cause of the trouble which stirred the normally placid Aberdeenshire town of Turnruff – with a white cow as its emblem – into a riotous frenzy in 1913 was the National Insurance Act, introduced by David Lloyd George while he was Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Although this legislation marked a





■ The Turra Coo memorial was erected outside Lendrum Farm in 1971.

## The 4,000 crowd applauded as the band played *See, the Conquering Hero Comes*. . .

crowd was in good humour, but not so the poor cow. It had been made nervous by the cheering, barking dogs, and the pain caused by the turpentine which had been used in an effort to remove the painted slogans. When someone cut the restraining rope she made off at speed.

Applauding this outcome, the crowd then turned its attention upon the auctioneer, Sammie Gordon. Fireworks were set off and various missiles thrown, including eggs, bags of soot, and (in the dialect of the district) 'an antrin cloddie an' a nail runt or twa'.

The luckless man abandoned the sale and took refuge in a nearby stable, requiring the assistance of the police to extricate him. In the subsequent trial, Robert Paterson and seven other men were charged with breach of the peace; but tactfully the Sheriff-Principal returned verdicts of 'not proven'.

Meantime, three days after the riot, the authorities again took the cow and transferred it by rail to Aberdeen, where it was sold behind closed doors for £7. However, a number of Buchan farmers clubbed together and bought her back.

She was returned to Turriff to a tumultuous welcome from a crowd some 4,000 strong – her neck and horns were garlanded, she again bore appropriate slogans, and a band heralded her arrival in the square by playing 'See, the Conquering Hero Comes!'

She lived out her days peacefully at Lendrum Farm, where she died in 1919.

The animal may have passed away, but its celebrity did not. A great variety of souvenirs were produced, items of domestic pottery being particularly popular.

In 1971, a commemorative cairn was erected by the roadside at Lendrum. Sandy Fenton, formerly director of the National Museum of Scotland, hails from the district, and has written a little book on the affair.

He concludes: "Robert Paterson has become a folk hero, though it is entirely typical of North-East humour that the Turra Coo herself outshines all in memory and myth". ●

major advance in social welfare, benefitting those who worked in the industrial urban centres, it was not welcomed in rural areas, where ill-health, occupational injury, and unemployment, were for years prevalent.

The Act imposed a contribution of 7d per week for every worker, the employer paying 3d and the employee 4d, the taxes this raised to be used in funding social welfare benefits. Opposition to these measures was particularly strong in the North-East, and attention focussed on Robert Paterson, an innovative farmer at Lendrum near Turriff.

He was secretary of the Turriff District Protest Association, and he decided to oppose the Act head on by declining to participate in the scheme.

He refused to pay for the insurance stamps on his own account, and he persuaded his eight farm workers, probably with no great reluctance, to do likewise.

Paterson was duly charged by the Procurator-Fiscal with failure to pay his contributions, and fined £15 (20 offenses at 15s each). He paid the

fine, but objected to the amount of arrears which he was also required to pay, even though it was a much smaller sum.

The Scottish Insurance Commissions responded by ordering the poinding (legal seizure) and sale of his property. The Sheriff Officer at Turriff went to Lendrum Farm with the intention of poinding a cow, choosing not one of the beasts from the dairy herd (the value of which would have been more than the

required amount), but the smaller white cow which supplied milk to the Paterson household.

Immediately, the forces of protest became apparent. No-one would supply transport, so the cow was led the four miles into town on foot.

Both of the cattle marts in Turriff refused to handle the sale, which consequently had to be conducted in the open air, and they also refused to supply an auctioneer, so a special license had to be acquired to secure one from Macduff.

Paterson seized this opportunity to publicise his opposition to the National Insurance Act by painting slogans on the cow's flanks before she was led away.

The sale of the cow was set for noon on Tuesday, 9 December, 1913, in the town square of Turriff, which was packed by a huge crowd of perhaps 2,000 people. Farmers and hands alike wore their day-out clothes, the men having been given a half-holiday. The



■ The commemorative industry in action. . . a Turra Coo ashet.



# Missing people from an empty landscape



**On the side of Ben Lawers I found clusters of ruins, little bridges over burns, evidence of a once thriving community. The Clearances did for the lot, mourns biker historian David Ross**

**S**tarting in my teens, I used to spend all my available free time wandering the hills of the Highlands, doing a bit of Munro-bagging while I enjoyed learning the topography of Scotland, in every kind of weather, usually entailing a gallon of water down each boot.

Most of the empty glens I crossed would have a rickle of stones here, perhaps a gable-end still standing against the weather there, or I would notice the small patches of lighter green where there had once been cultivation.

On the north side of Ben Lawers, I discovered a cluster of ruins, little bridges over the burns, evidence that once there had been a thriving community. As I walked on I imagined someone in, say, Chicago, perhaps five generations an American, who had been a hundred generations a Highlander in Scotland, at the spot I was just passing.

Take any ordnance survey map covering the Highlands, and perusal of roadless glens will show a scatter of shielings, where once inhabitants spent their summers with their livestock in the high pastures.

The Jacobite uprisings were the beginning of the end, of course, followed by many of the chiefs desiring to distance themselves from anything remotely Highland and/or seditious, and the replacement of tenants with more profitable sheep.

The empty glens are proof enough, of course, but there are several sites bearing a testament to those times. When the people from Glencalvie in Easter Ross were evicted from the land which they had farmed since people first came to these northern latitudes, they found temporary shelter in the churchyard of the Parliamentary Church at Croick in Strathcarron.

The ministers, who should have done all in their power to help them, were under the sway of the landowners, and told the populace their misfortune was due to their



■ Where have all the people gone? The Highlands were once the most populated part of Scotland. The Clearances added a sad dimension.

own sinfulness, and that all their ills were brought on in retribution.

They spent a whole winter in the churchyard before their scattering, and during this time they scratched little messages on the window panes of the church.

One reads: "Glencalvie people was in the churchyard, May 24, 1845." Another reads: "Glencalvie people – the wicked generation."

The little church stands on the unclassified road that runs westwards from the village of Bonar Bridge up the length of Strathcarron.

Above the village of Golspie in Sutherland, high on Beinn a Bhragie, stands the famous statue of the infamous 1st Duke of Sutherland, created by the sculptor Chantrey. Much debate has taken place regarding this landmark, which can be seen for miles around.

The Duke was responsible for much of the 'improvements' from Cape Wrath to the Dornoch Firth. Many people want the statue to be retained as a reminder of the Highland Clearances, whereas others see it as an affront and wish it to be destroyed in order to erase his memory.

His home was Dunrobin Castle (a

fitting name), which stands to the north of Golspie. It had originally been a fortified structure dating back to 1275, but by 1856 it had taken on the almost Disney-like aspect which can be seen today. It is open to the public at certain times during the summer.

It is strange that Leveson-Gower, an Englishman who had married into the Sutherland family to become Duke, should have had the right to clear the indigenous people from their homes, folk who had been on the land since the dawn of time. He probably had no more sympathy for the locals than the early settlers in Australia or America had for the natives there.

Driving to the far north of Scotland and taking one of the many straths that fan out from Lairg, the empty land before you is possibly the best indication I could give as testament of the Clearances. Scotland's loss, however, was to be to the benefit of the New World. A glance at the names on maps shows the impact of the colonial Scots.

For example, Calgary was the name of a tiny settlement on Mull. Its name was carried by the locals to their new homes. Calgary is now a mighty Canadian city. ●



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Glasgow Museums; Crofts: Scottish

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Maiden painting by Thomas

Faed/Aberdeen Art Gallery; Shepherd

& Sheep & Eviction: Scottish Life

Archive/NMS.

p8/9/10 Cotton Mills, Masons working

on Scott Monument: SNPG; Lord

Cockburn by Sir John Watson

Gordon/SNPG.

p11/12/13 Buccleuch Place, Fife:

Kirkcaldy Museum & Art Gallery;

Seagate, Dundee & High Street Vennel:

RCAHMS

p14/15 Bothy Band & Outhouse:

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p16/17/18/19 First General Assembly

& Thomas Chalmers: Daily Record;

Boat at Shore: NMS; Glasgow Cathedral

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Steve McNeill/Sunday Mail; William of

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Scottish Borders Council Museum

Service.

p24/25 Gordon Highlanders Painting

by Sam Bough/Bank of Scotland.

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# SCOTLAND'S STORY

## NEXT WEEK IN PART 43



Tartan mania when it arrived was led by Queen Victoria herself. The Highlands were her joy and she became devoted to Highlanders, and one in particular – the manly John Brown. Suddenly kilts, pipes, and tartan were in vogue. Scotland was changing, rail fever gripping, and an Edinburgh writer called Robert Louis Stevenson was wowing his readers.

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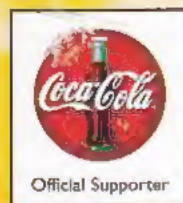
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